

AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

Please replace the original abstract with the replacement abstract provided on a separate sheet.

ABSTRACT

A picture coding method for generating a coded picture signal ~~Str~~ on which rapid random access can be performed while preventing a decrease in compression rate. The method includes: a first reference restriction step (~~Step S106~~) of restricting, in a target access unit to be processed (~~RAU~~), so that a post-entry picture refers to another picture except for the following pictures: (1) a picture located before an entry picture in coding order, and (2) a pre-entry picture; and a second reference restriction step (~~Step S114 or Step S116~~) of restricting, in the immediately following access unit (~~RAU~~), so that a pre-entry picture refers to another picture except for the following pictures: (1) a picture located before an entry picture in the target access unit (~~RAU~~) in coding order, and (2) a pre-entry picture in the target access unit (~~RAU~~).